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INDIGNANT RHYMES,

P67-63

ADDRESSED TO THE ELECTORAL BODY AT LARGE.

BY

AN ILLUSED CANDIDATE.

George John Caley

LONDON:

PRINTED BY ROBERT K. BURT.

1859.

THOUGH words be wind, shall eloquence avail
To swell the canvass of a Borough's sale ?
That's not the right breeze for a prosperous trip
In the peculiar craft of statesmanship !
The wind true patriots raise resembles most
A steady trade-wind on the Guinea coast.

Ye ten-pound householders! Ye freemen bold!
Most truly called (though falsely spelt) high-souled—
High-sold, indeed, who deign not to consider
The claims of any but the highest bidder!
We talk to find you pretexts for your votes,
But through your breeches pockets turn your coats.
Oh independent hirelings—brave poltroons,
I set your eulogy to scurvy tunes ;
We ill-used candidates our spleen must vent—
All's wrong till we get into Parliament.

Why did I stand ? They told me "'Twas in vain,
 For venal voters bribes alone could gain."
 "Mankind," I cried, "are poised 'twixt truth and guile ;
 Treated as villains honest men grow vile :
 And, when appealed to nobly, now and then
 Knaves have been known to act like honest men.
 'Tis candidates spoil voters, still appealing
 To their base instincts. I will try plain dealing !"
 Trusting to Truth then I—in vain of course—
 Harangued you till my very soul was hoarse.
 You heard me—cheered me—said " 'twas like a play."
 "'Twas true as gospel"—until polling day.
 Have patience with me while my gall I spill,
 I've split my voice—just let me blunt my quill.
 A little ink-shed will my rancour ease
 And I shall roar you softer by degrees.

Come ! you are not so utterly depraved,
 You have your faith whereby the realm is saved.
 Protestantism and Ploutocracy
 Form the twin sockets of the axle-tree
 On which, as Earth revolves between her poles,
 Our constitution sphered in glory rolls :
 Still in your lukewarm breasts two vital germs
 Keep our foul body politic from the worms ;



Freedom's sole safeguard, order's only hope,
 You worship money and you hate the Pope.
 As to your truckling mercenary zeal
 For that old monotroch the common weal
 (Though now and then you set your shoulders to it
 When by your betters roundly paid to do it)
 Your politics—forsooth ! On nave and fellow
 Mere fancy pickings out in blue and yellow.

Let the state coach strain up, or down hill trundle.
 What's the *Imperial* to your yellow bundle ?
 The inside lady passenger perhaps
 May tremble for her bonnets and her caps,
 And the state coachman's heart may thump his ribs
 When wheelers blunder or a leader jibs—
 Leave the old gilded rumble to its shifts
 Unless it offer you your private lifts.

A truce to metaphor ! In language plain,
 Thrice cursed be jobbery the Nation's bane ! [spray
 Thrice cursed in root, stem, bough, branch, twig and
 Be the huge Upas of corruption's sway.
 Our national eye a golden jaundice taints,
 And gilded guilt seems worth in Mammon's saints—
 Money is from *monere*, to advise,
 Thus golden arguments prove statesmen wise.

The Jews at Sinai valued more by half
 Than God's commandments ten one golden calf,
 And Bouillonville (by foes writ Bullion-veal)
 Outweighs with Bullborough's voters a vast deal
 (Being John Bull, Earl Bullborough's eldest son)
 Ten British Constitutions rolled in one.
 He is a liberal of the ultra school,
 Ruled by the mob which he affects to rule.
 His wit is feeble but his voice is loud,
 He lows plump ditto to the bellowing crowd.
 The Earl his father has too much to lose
 Quite to approve such very ultra views ;
 Still his main point of constitutional writ
 Is that his bullcalf shall for Bullborough sit :
 No matter what opinions he profess,
 Bullcalf must sit for Bullborough none the less.
 True he might buy elsewhere two safer seats
 With half the gold he voids and dirt he eats ;
 But then " the Constitution's soul consists
 In keeping up our local interests."

Thus with much outlay, trouble, and disgust,
 He throws in Bullborough's eyes his yellow dust,
 Spends in the town his money like a lord,
 Feasts borough-bigwigs at his groaning board ;

Gives them three fingers of his gracious hand
And quells their souls with condescension bland.

How savoury is the fare in high abodes !
How dainty is a fricassee of toads !
How well his lordship's *chef le brave* Grenouille
Dresses those wearers of the precious jewel !
The uses of prosperity are sweet
When such choice reptiles in *sauce blanche* we eat :
And Bouillonville with democratic mien
Seated two stout constituents between
Minds me of *pigeon à la crapaudine*.
He too his toads must swallow while King Log
His sire the noble Earl provides the prog.

But is this all the borough-bigwig's lure
His lordship's borough interest to secure ?
No ! 'tis his lordship's cousin pulls the wire,
The good Duke Lord-Lieutenant of the shire,
When the chief swans among his kinsman's geese
He puts on the Commission of the peace.

Meanwhile our bigwigs duly gorged and sluiced,
Into the drawing room are introduced ;
They mince their phrases fine and bow and scrape,
Or, ill at ease, a sturdy bluntness ape :
His lordship's port seems frozen in their maw
Nor till they leave his presence can it thaw ;

But they grow jolly on their homeward way—
 “Old Bull’s a thorough-going trump!” they say;
 And for months after, feel, in feudal pride,
 With aristocracy identified.

Shall they not cheerfully requite their chief
 With the due villein-service of their feoff?
 Shall they not persevere through thick and thin
 Each supple voter’s slippery word to pin?
 Viewing his snivelling sneak-tubs cringe and cower,
 The borough-bigwig tastes the sweets of power—
 He truckled to my lord, but honest Trim
 The liberal tradesman truckles now to him!
 Does not my lord, who would a marquis be,
 Vote black is white to please a ministry?
 As they have made their beds both low and high
 (Especially if truckle beds) must lie.
 All ultra politicians *lie* per force
 Since Truth herself lies in a middle course.
 The measure of their falsehood to arrive at,
 Contrast their words in public and in private.
 Our patriot lordling will on hustings babble
 His blatant echoes of the rampant rabble.

“True wisdom still among the many reigns,
 “For horny hands will never have soft brains!

"Inherent franchise means a five pound rent,

" And Ballot all corruption will prevent."

In private, if you hint—" About your ears

" You may bring down, ere long, the House of Peers !"

He answers—" Nonsense ! Voters are a race

"Of Sycophants ! The lower you debase

" Their franchise, the more freely wealth and rank

" Command them through the beer-house and the bank."

" Corruption you uphold !"—" Of course I do !

" In practice, nothing else will pull one through."

" And yet you cry for ballot to upset it !"

" We vote for ballot but don't hope to get it !"

" Why then support the ballot ?"—" Don't you see

" We must keep up our popularity !"

So then you pay your money to decant

In Parliament this small sour pot-house rant—

Mouthpiece by purchase at your weight in cash,

Of cries with which your own convictions clash.

I wonder liberal statesmen are content

To crawl through so much dirt to Parliament.

" The independent liberal will not rise

In muddy streams, unless to gaudy flies :

And having hooked him, that is only half,

You must secure him with the golden gaff.

"If thus you fish for your ten-pounder's vote,
 Disgorging hard coin for the jarring note
 Which he crams down your inharmonious throat,
 It seems to me a very sorry sport
 You ply, and most distinguished shame you court."

"Facts best explain the divers views we hold—
 "I bought my borough—you by yours were sold."

"Your *seat* you bought—much as a hawker buys
 His license—and you hawk your borough's cries.
 To Parliament you bear your pedlar's pack
 Of nonsense second-hand upon your back—
 And, to be less encumbered, leave behind
 Your conscience, and all power to speak your mind."

"To speak my mind! I have no mind to speak
 In Parliament."—"Each parrot has his beak—
 Each patriot member, through his crotchet bill,
 Preparatory pledges must fulfil."

"Well, a few shies of liberalism hearty
 Secure one's seat, but I support my party.
 We know these ultra measures always fail—
 Tubs to amuse the democratic whale!"

"I fear such whaling may in weeping end,
 And fill your tubs with your own blubberings, friend.
 No luck on humbug ever did attend.

Sham liberal ! recreant conservative
 With clench-fist pocketed you feign to give
 Fumbling with false reforms, till hope deferred
 (Contrasting liberal deed with liberal word)
 Turns the disheartened suppliant away,
 Offended more than by an honest "nay."
 Exclusive oligarch, you sympathise
 In public with the injured people's cries —
 You think by humouring the rabble's whim
 Your waning lamp of Whiggery to trim.
 Dreading true justice to the working class,
 You shout for franchises too big to pass;
 You help to raise, but cannot lull the storm
 With windy promises you don't perform;
 You puff quack pills of ballot to repress
 Oppression while you cease not to oppress.

Corruption's toadstools, poisonous and pale,
 (Like cellar funguses on casks of ale)
 Which in dark stuffy holes so rankly bear,
 Wither in open daylight and fresh air.
 Example spreads the independent leaven—
 Tom feels his shame while Jack will not be driven.
 Jack thrives no worse for voting as he pleases,
 Selling no fewer flitches, hams and cheeses

(Who sell the best and cheapest cheese and bacon
 Are never for mere politics forsaken);
 While Dick, whose groceries are not so choice,
 Gives in as bonus his electoral voice—
 Draws non-electors with his liberal gammon—
 Or borough-bigwigs, making friends with Mammon.
 Tom votes with dirty Dick—but honest Jack
 He now respects and may hereafter back.
 A secret voting system must out-trample
 This growing spark of purity's example,
 Must quench the independent voter's pride
 And the base truckler's wholesome blushes hide.
 Ballot might skin and film the ulcerous place
 In our electoral system's blotchy face,
 While foul corruption mining down within
 Unseen infected all beneath the skin.

Lower extend the present franchise ! you extend
 With it corruption and the suffrage-vend.
 The tag-rag of each class are venal still,
 And coward puppets of some patron's will.
 Self-interest still must sway the common herd
 By private fear and private favour stirred.
 Till boldness shall to rats and mice belong,
 Look not for independence in the throng,
 The many truckle and the few are strong.

Labour has rights—let her those rights assert,
 Not through ten million right hands smeared with dirt—
 The common herd in hovel, hut and cottage,
 Will sell their birthright for a mess of pottage—
 No special weakness ! no peculiar blame !
 The common run of tradesmen are the same ;
 The common run of statesmen, when they may,
 For selfish ends will public trusts betray.
 The strong men of each class command—the weak
 By mean servility employment seek :
 And thus the high class workman can afford
 More independence than a shabby lord ;
 Can speak and vote with frankness far more thorough
 Than the dull member for a ticklish borough.

An able statesman if his seat be loose
 Has many offers soon from which to choose :
 At no great sacrifice our man of note
 Can in accordance with his conscience vote—
 Or if he sells it 'tis a seat to get,
 Not in the house, but in the cabinet.
 The inner furnace melts his knightly spurs,
 Thus patriots stout grow feeble ministers,
 And opposition lions learn to roar
 Like sucking doves within the treasury door.

Few of our faithful commons now are paid
 In solid cash for ministerial aid,
 Though many are with "indirection" linked
 And our blunt Cassii are not quite extinct.
 Just in proportion as constituencies
 Elect their members on less false pretences,
 With ministerial bribery's decline
 More members take an independent line.

Hack tapists have good reason to complain
 That party government is on the wane;
 Their tape-rigged argosies on rocks must strike
 When our best Whigs and Tories think alike—
 If coalition fuse the leader ranks
 Your hacks and tapists are dismissed with thanks,
 Or if imbecile proved in higher spheres
 Enter the Parish Union House as peers.

One party mainly right and t'other wrong
 On some great principle make Party strong.
 Can Whig or Tory much prevail when both
 To touch Reform at all alike are loath,
 Both dallying with it squeamishly to court
 Their sulky mutual enemy's support?
 Oh Tories, if you only had the pluck
 To go in heartily and take your luck—

With bold plain dealing to be just to all—
 Think you the sky (unpropped by you) must fall?
 Prop not the sky with your ingenious dodges,
 In England's breast a stubborn caution lodges:
 Whether the outward tint be blue or buff
 All England's coats are lined with Tory stuff.
 Hold to your principles, but make them square
 By justice to all classes firm and fair:
 With maintenance of right redress of wrong
 Surely to order's champions should belong.
 But you resist redress for fear those shreds
 Of true blue sky should tumble on your heads.
 Your boasted constitutional machine
 You fear might founder if its wheels were clean—
 "For God's sake touch not the time-honoured dirt"
 Alarmed you bellow long before you're hurt.
 A pound of soap by scrubbing-brushes plied
 All undue friction might have rectified;
 That yellow soap once turned to liberal lather,
 O'er all the heavens inflated globules gather—
 Filled with the breath of demagogues who dip
 Their pipes and blow with Boreas cheek and lip.
 The rabble, caught with ease by ear or eye,
 Take up the "Yallow soap for ever" cry—

“Break all the wheels—each cog the friction doubles—
And let the constitution roll on bubbles!”

The source whence our electoral evils flow
Is not too high a franchise but too low—
The forty shilling and the ten-pound test
Let in the worst together with the best—
The many vote as they are driven or bought
Giving their true class interests scarce a thought.

It is a maxim of our craven time
That retrogression is a fatal crime.
However much too far we may have gone,
Our only safety lies in moving on.
Each dastard politician shuddering feels
That Revolution dogs his tardy heels.
We can't go back! Let us go forward then
And leaven our base franchise with true men.
One great class uncorrupted yet remains
To stir with new blood our electoral veins,
Who, if their leaven we with wisdom use,
May in the carrion lump new life infuse.
Fear not! Far nobler spirits are arrayed
In LABOUR's vanguard than the ruck of TRADE.
Give Labour her numerical equality,
Her fair third share in the whole voting polity,

And she can clothe her picked electoral body
 In genuine staple clear of dust and shoddy.
 Prolific Labour, with a mother's pride,
 Of sons deep-brained, broad-breasted, eagle-eyed,
 Can furnish her choice phalanx more than fit—
 Measured by manhood and by mother-wit—
 To claim her equal birthright in the three
 Estates of LABOUR, TRADE AND PROPERTY.

For no such chosen vessels Brummagem
 Thy chosen champion pleads. He loves not them—
 The servile flock his millocrats could poll
 In sheepish droves he trusts with all his soul—
 For Boanerges loves his labourer still
 (As in the days of Ashley's ten hours bill)
 Much like the engines clanking in his mill.
 He loves them for the power to him they yield,
 Whether that power by limb or vote he wield.
 He trusts the spinning jennies' feeble ranks
 But gives a wide berth to the lunging cranks:
 Toil's aristocracy who lead the gangs
 Are gritty morsels to oppression's fangs.
 The small steel-tempered end of Labour's wedge
 Most sets the millocrat's eye-teeth on edge—
 Labour the labourer's interest to promote
 Is not the sort of labour for a vote.

Your high-paid hands ; high-paid from being rare,
 Less tractable because more hard to spare,
 Are not so lightly tethered to your will,
 Ye democratic despots of the mill.

The Elect would take more driving than the mass—
 Less swell the brute force of your master class—

“ Encourage Independence and the like ?

“ Pshaw ! High-class workmen are the first to strike.”

Workmen ! let Boanerges in his oil

Sputter the claims of taxes-paying toil—

His torch of freedom points your class's way

To baser bondage—his to broader sway. [friends”

He boasts his League ! what made those “ poor man's
 Assail the Bread-tax ? Sure no private ends !

The object of those philanthropic sages

In cheapening wheat was, what ? To lower wages.

You were mere sticks of agitation's rockets,

Your starving bellies meant their hungry pockets.

And now your cotton Lords and carpet Knights

Preach of a “ LARGE REFORM ” and “ PEOPLE'S RIGHTS,”

While the Reform they do approve of fully

Is to enfranchise workmen they can bully.

Do not your fine old Country Gentlemen

Bully their tenant-farmers now and then ?

Do not your county bigwigs base conspire
 To palm some small court card upon their shire ?
 Or if they stumble on a worthy man,
 Do they not use him as a warming-pan
 Till the Duke's whipper-snapper eldest son,
 Late plucked at Oxford, reaches twenty-one?
 Do territorial trucklers of the land
 Not poll their predial villains at command ?

They do—(but blame not England's ancient laws)
 Since the Reform Bill—by the Chandos clause.
 That clause enables—a true liberal measure—
 Landlords to squeeze their occupants at pleasure.
 "Vote as you please," the liberal landlord cries—
 But lets his agent privately advise.
 Canvass them ere that good advice they get,
 The tenants say, "We ha'en't wur orders yet."

"Why *liberal* landlords does your wrath pursue ?"

"Why ! Tory squires have liberal tenants few !"

I say not Tory squires would not coerce
 If they had liberal tenantries perverse ;
 But a Whig tenant farmer is a kind
 Of specimen most difficult to find.

The liberal Earl of Bullborough's luckless tenants,
 For my Lord's Borough politics do penance.

Ask one of them his views !—" We's t'yallow side
 " We vawts t'yoong Marcus as in coorse we's tied.
 Poor bairn his talk seem fit to meak yan puke
 Bud watt ! *His lordship's* summat kin te t'duke.
 You knaws, gin uz could vawt te please wur sens,
 We'd ploomp trew blew for Muster Farrowpens,
 He's t'man ! Whoy he *can* feel a pig i' t'shell
 And mention t'agricooltery interest well !
 Bud watt ! You knaws it's te naw youse you know !
 Which waa his Lordship gaws—whoy uz mun gaw."

Sign a Round-Robin, send it to my Lord,
 "Thus we should all vote of our own accord.
 " We trust your Lordship's sympathy well-known
 " For men who have opinions of their own
 " To hold us faithful tenants free from harm
 " As long as each does justice to his farm."
 Nine landlords out of ten with such appeal
 Would in a kindly generous spirit deal.
 Oppression is in fancy terrors dressed
 By coward spirits willingly oppressed—
 Men of bold heart, high soul and conscience clear
 Find bugbears, when they face them, disappear.
 Shew me a first-rate tenant turned adrift
 For a mere vote ! If evidence you sift,

Nine tenants out of ten (whose cases quoted
 Shew loss of farms because they freely voted)
 Voted because about to lose their farms—
 With mighty little zeal for freedom's charms—
 After old grudges, rankling more and more,
 Lacked but a trifle to top up the score,—
 Knowing the worst must needs come to the worst
 They ripped the festering sore about to burst ;
 And then on independent voting threw
 Blame to ill-blood and slovenly farming due.
 But be your landlord never such a Turk,
 Public opinion's voice he cannot burk.
 Across his knee the separate wands might shatter,
 But the whole faggot is a tougher matter.

“ He daren't discharge you bodily, I defy him ! ”

“ Whoy mebbe—Bud I wadn't like te try him.
 Rents can be lifted and impruvments lowered—
 Gin t'aagent get contrairied—whoy t'job's owered.”

“ In short 'tis not worth while to make a stand.”

“ Whoy not' te roonn a chance te loss yan land ! ”

Our patriot sires who for our freedom bled
 Risked land and life both capital and head—
Hereditary bondsmen know ye not,
 To bag your bird you first must fire your shot.

You can't have INDEPENDENCE till you care
 To get it—nor deserve it till you dare.
 Is INDEPENDENCE noble in your eyes ?
 Why so ! all noble human qualities
 Are but ennobled by self-sacrifice.
 Corruption's mountains FAITH alone can move,
 A daring suffering faith which deeds approve.
 But as for you—Be hanged both Blues and Yellows !
 "DON'T CARE" 's the motto of your moral gallows.
 There may you hang high gibbeted in shame—
 Dastards who dare not push your freedom's claim,—
 Ignoble apathetic whimpering curs,
 Whom if a generous impulse ever stirs,
 Soon coward chills o'ercome your feeble fervours:
 Poor Truth and Gammon God and Mammon servers—
 Whining, alas ye can't both sell and save
 Those good intents your downward path which pave !
 Till you believe good Government *might* mean more
 Than selfish scrambling at the Treasury door—
 Till you believe that bold wise honest men
 Might purify that money-changer's den,
 Once Freedom's temple—that sham Parliament
 Where trucklers base base trucklers represent—
 That honest men are *not* selected best
 By mutual bargain of self-interest—

(Since base corrupt constituencies choose
 Bold honest champions of unselfish views
 By the same well-known natural law which shapes
 From thorn and thistle blossom figs and grapes)
 Till you believe that jobbery in Election
 Breeds jobbery also in the State's direction—
 Till a self-reformation you begin
 Purging your own souls from Corruption's sin—
 Till from your necks the rotten yoke you break,
 Daring to vote for your opinion's sake ;
 The State may drift to leeward in the Storm—
 Calling wreck-signals " Measures of Reform "—
 May to the stormfiends fling without avail
 Her disemboweled cargo bale by bale—
 Each new Electoral leak will leave you worse,
 More deeply water-logged with jobbery's curse ;
 Till, as the waves of anarchy o'erwhelm
 Our commonwealth, a despot grasps the helm.





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